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## Athena Tacha: Tape Sculptures

Wright State University Art Gallery

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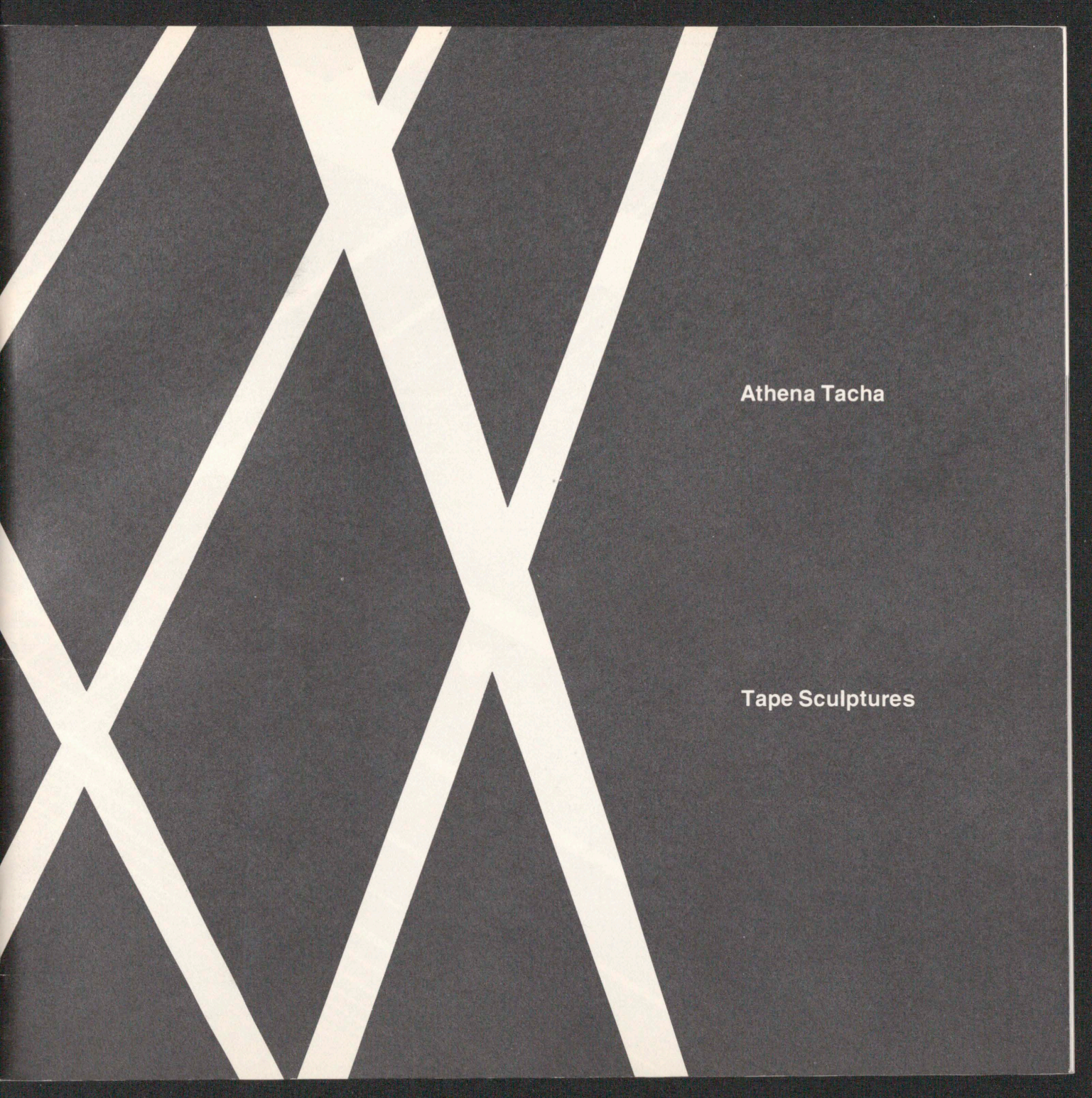
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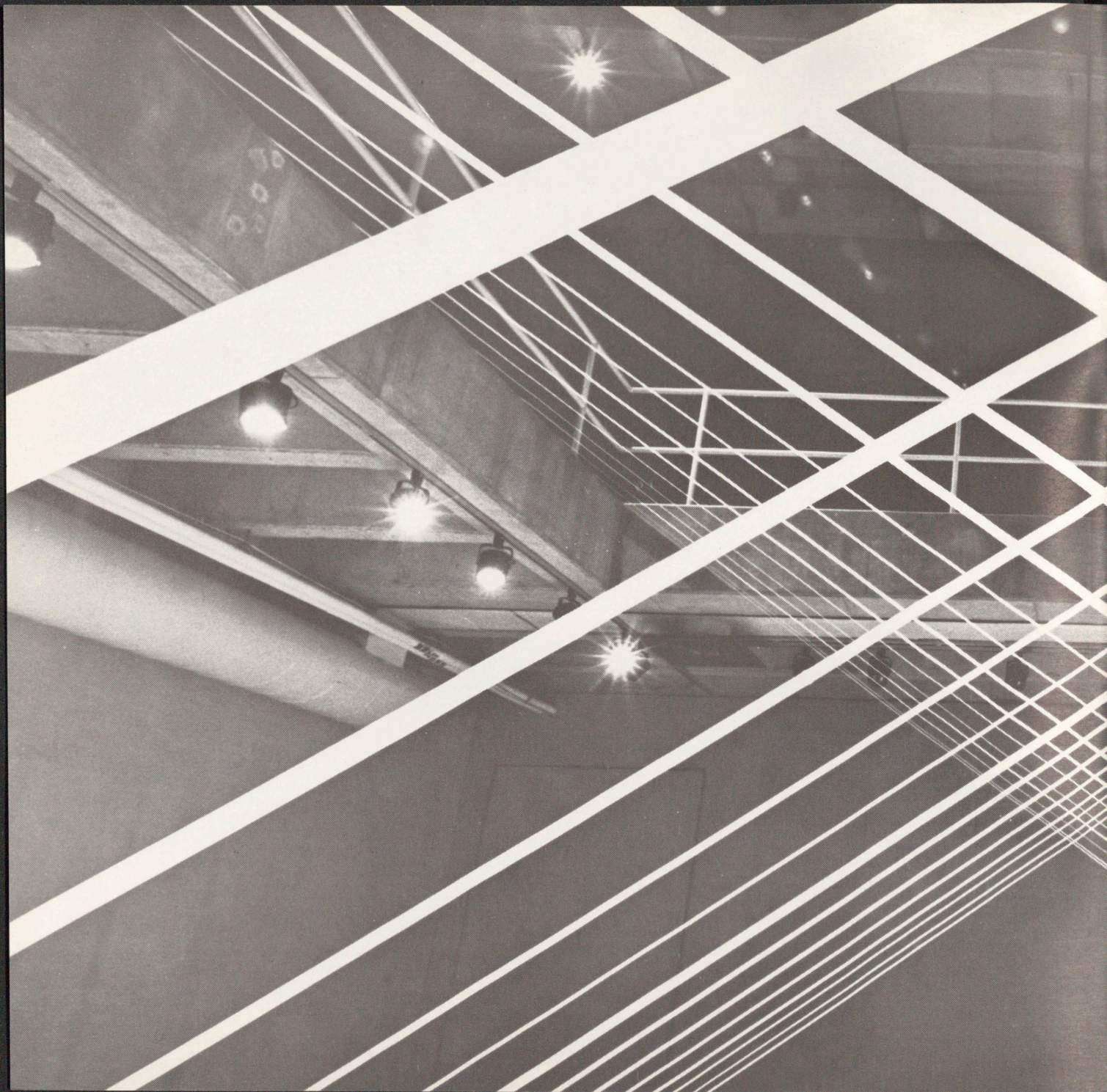
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The image features a dark, textured background. On the left side, there is a large, abstract geometric pattern composed of several thick, white, diagonal lines that intersect to form a series of overlapping triangles and diamonds. The lines are oriented at approximately 45 and 135 degrees. The right side of the image is a solid, dark grey or black area.

Athena Tacha

Tape Sculptures







# **Athena Tacha: Tape Sculptures**

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A Series of Eight Installations

Wright State University Art Gallery

October 21-November 3, 1978





The idea that led to the tape sculptures literally came to me in a dream in late 1976. It was both an image and a title: "from wall to floor," i.e., taking the height of the wall—a linear element—and transferring it gradually to the floor. It evidently sprang from an earlier series of works, my *Cut-ins* or "tension sculptures" (started in 1974), where I dealt with similar architectural relationships of interior spaces: wall to wall, ceiling to floor, and other such surface transferrals. The tape sculptures, which took clear form in my mind when I first saw the Wright State University gallery in January 1977, deal instead with relationships between edges and dimensions of interior architectural spaces.

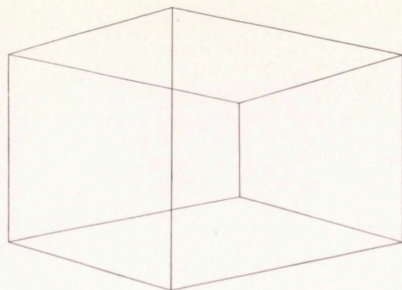
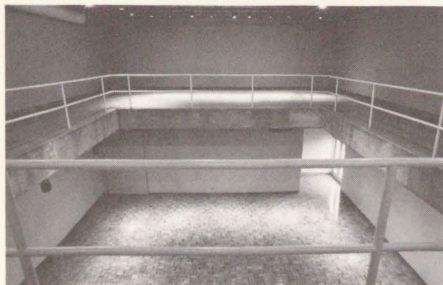


A normal rectangular room has four horizontal edges between ceiling and walls, four vertical edges between walls, and four more horizontals between walls and floor. Connecting those edges in various ways through hypothetical planes (evoked by equidistant lines) creates a new awareness of that space. If one adds to the edges such basic dimensions of the room's surfaces as medians and diagonals, then the possible relationships multiply.



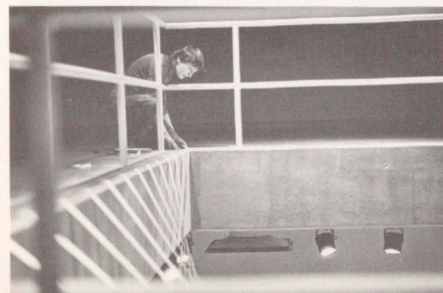
The Wright State University Art Gallery has an unusual and handsome space which lends itself to some of these relationships. The second floor communicates with the one below through a 20-by-20-foot opening or overhanging balcony so that a shaft of square space rises through both floors. The eight tape sculptures which I designed for this space deal with that square and its projection on the floor below. The disadvantage of having no verticals to connect with is fully compensated by the possibility of having the sculpture freely suspended between two stories. Thus each sculpture can be seen from all around, as well as from above (the balcony level) and from below, where the viewer can walk into or through the work.





Before the Wright State University show was arranged, I executed two works from this series in Oberlin and New York, and I then had to settle on a material. String felt unsatisfactory to me because of its unidimensionality. Tape has more presence, catches the light well, and indicates both directions of a plane. Among the various tapes I considered, spackling paper tape seemed to have the right width and strength, and its off-white color related well to most modern interior walls. It also had a natural affinity to the wall due to its usual function. I hope to execute my tape sculptures in outdoor urban spaces as well, even among trees in the woods. Relationships between such irregular givens will result in more unpredictable forms, which makes the exploration still more challenging. For outdoors, I will use asbestos woven tape, as it will have to withstand the wind and rain.

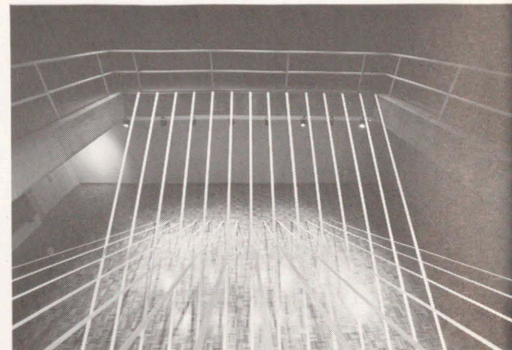
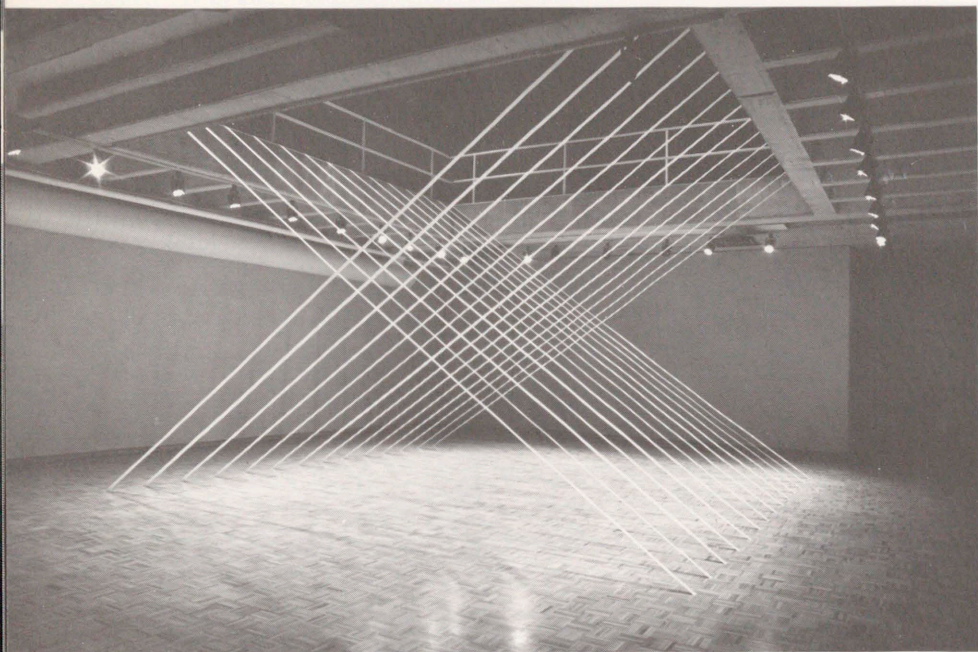
An unforeseen effect of the tape sculptures at Wright State University was their illusionistic play between two- and three-dimensionality. Viewed from some points, the works looked completely two-dimensional, while from other sides they assumed a pronounced spatial existence, even creating volumetric effects as the planes of tape twisted and wrapped space. Like my "fold sculptures" of the early seventies and like the *Cut-ins*, these tape pieces are a way of structuring space through two-dimensional means.



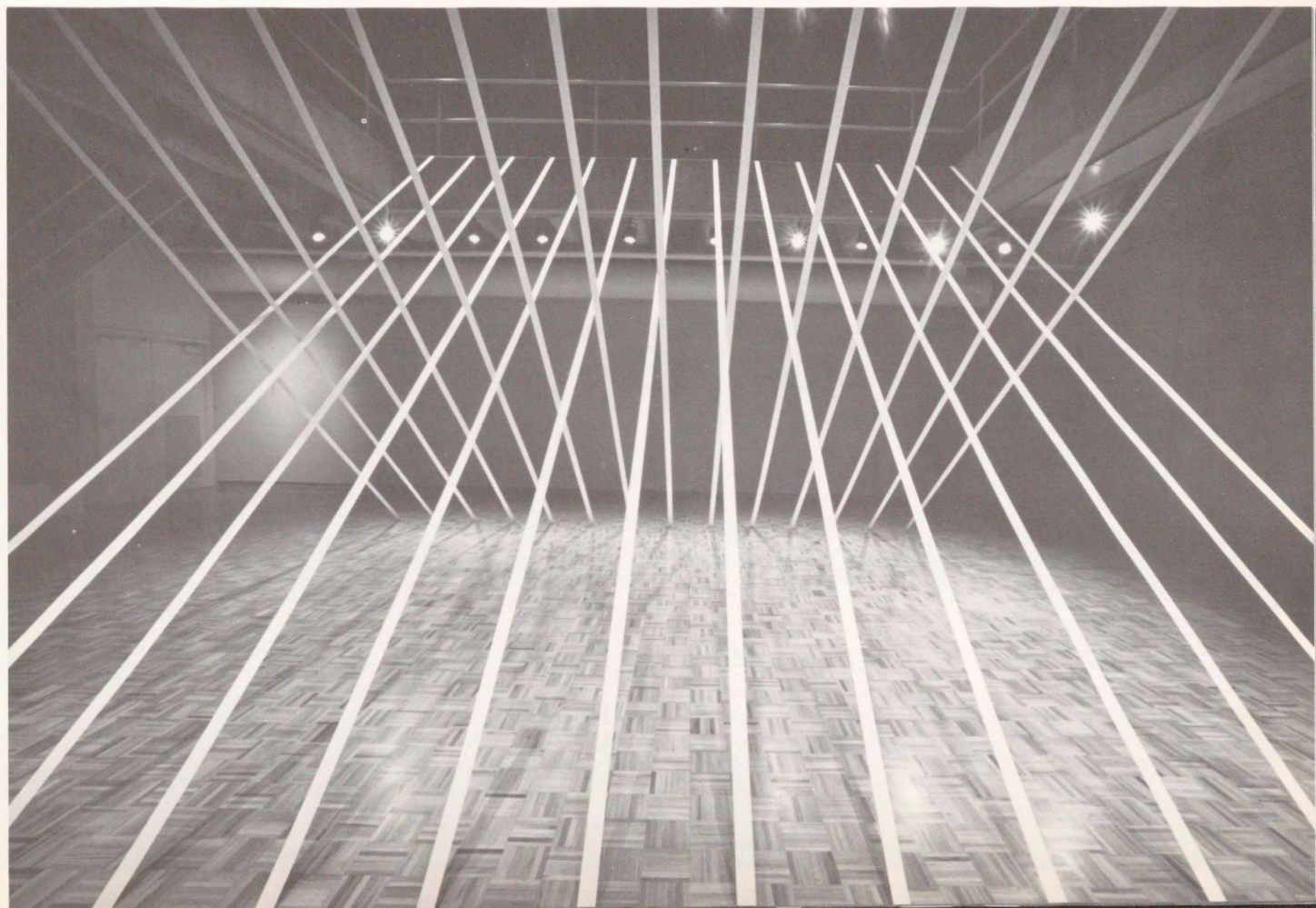
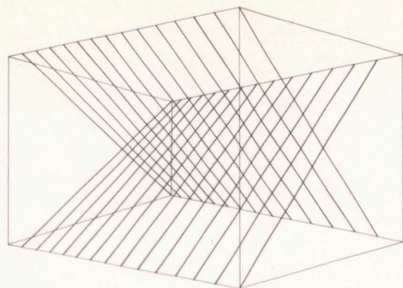
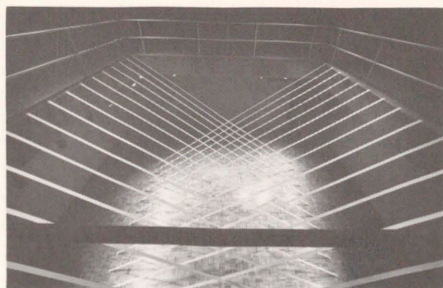
Athena Tacha, October 1978



October 21

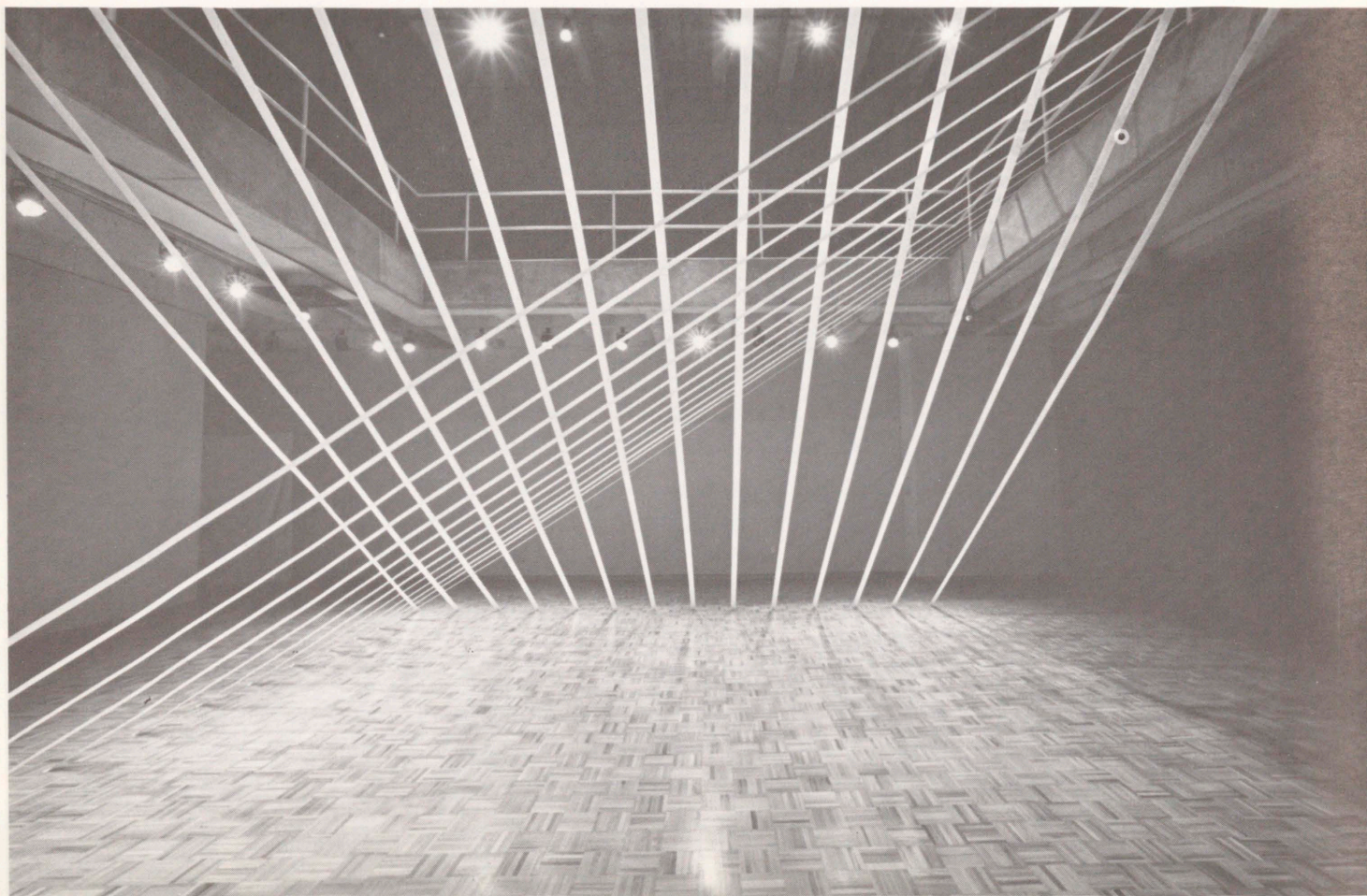




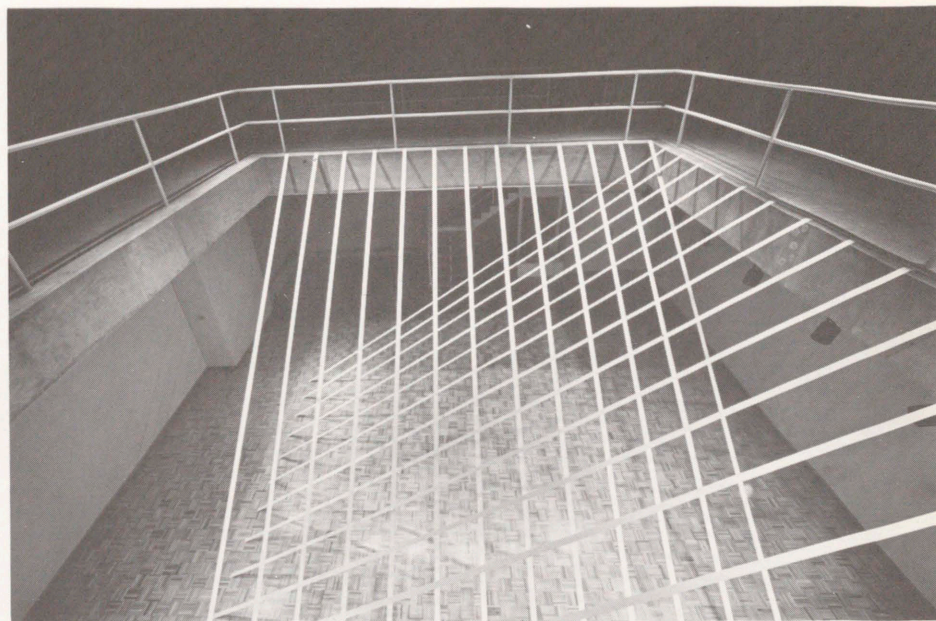
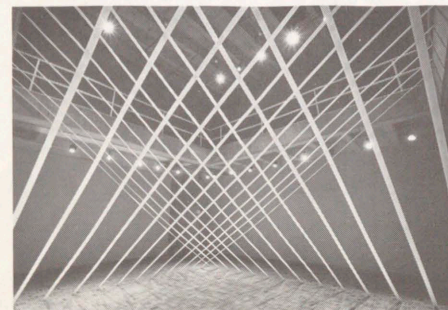
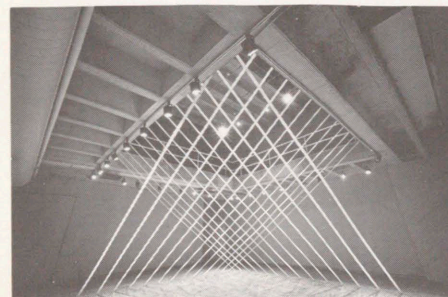
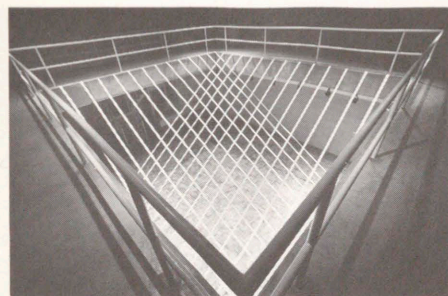
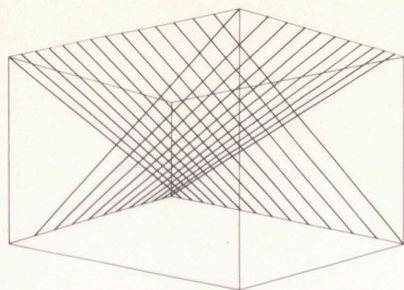
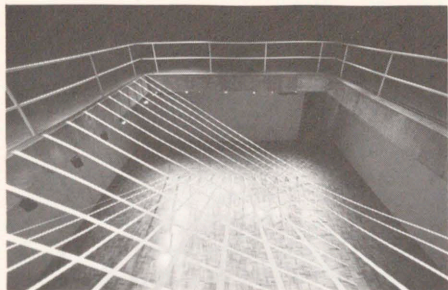




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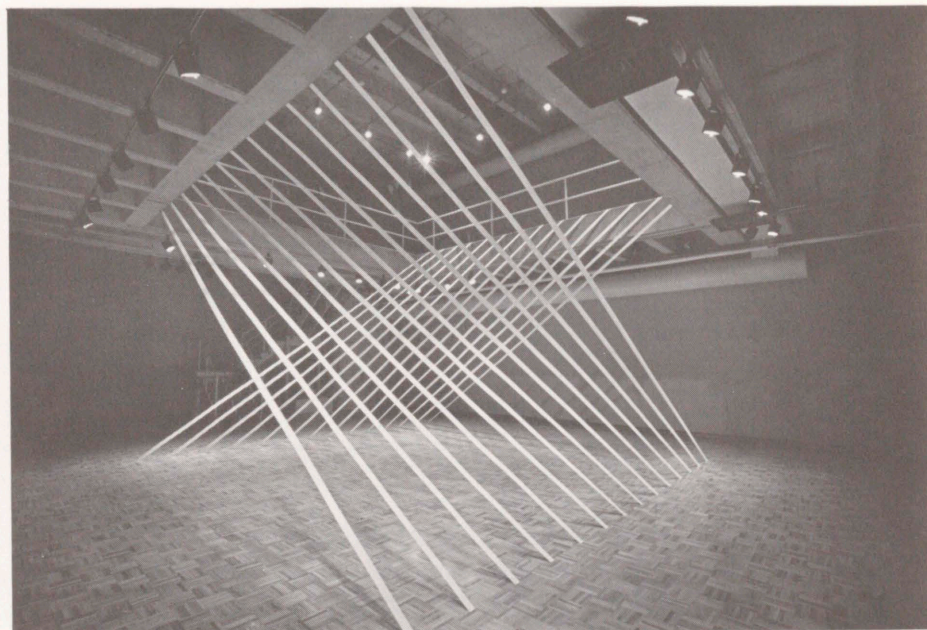
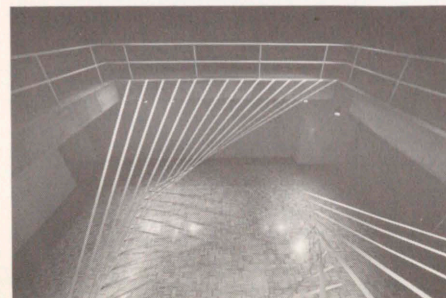
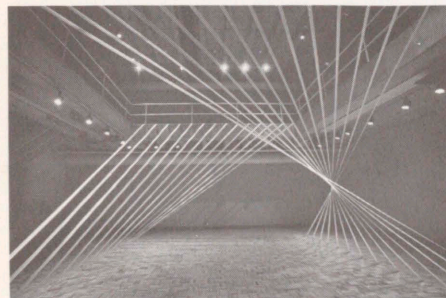
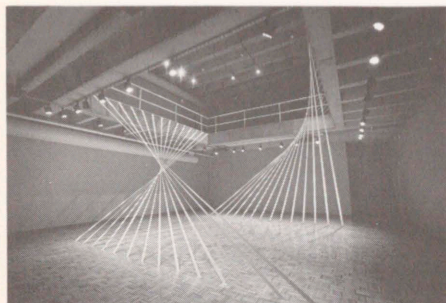




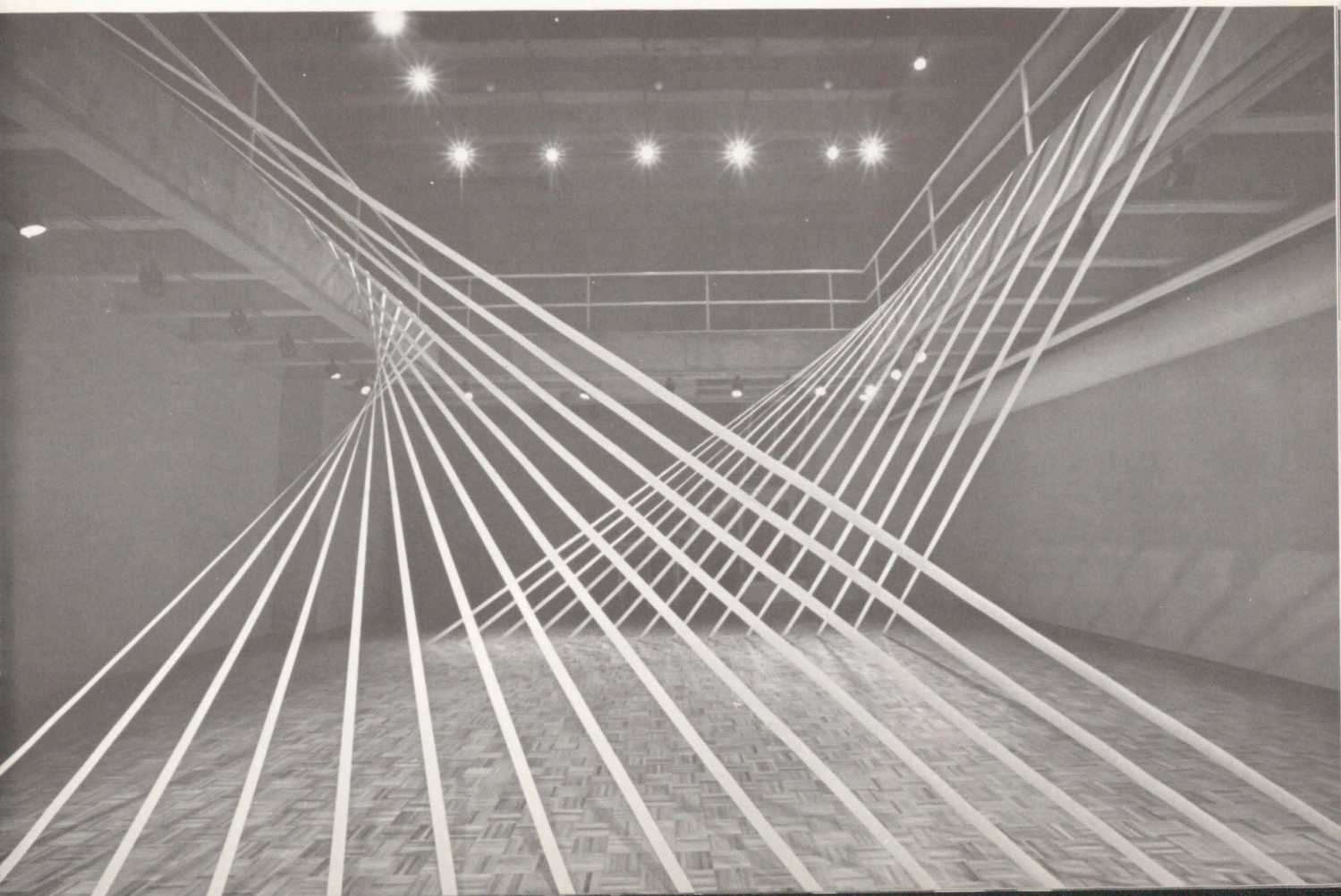
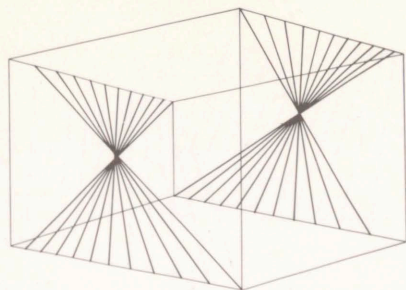
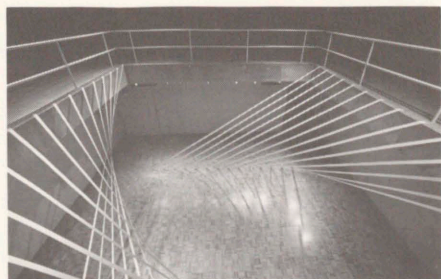




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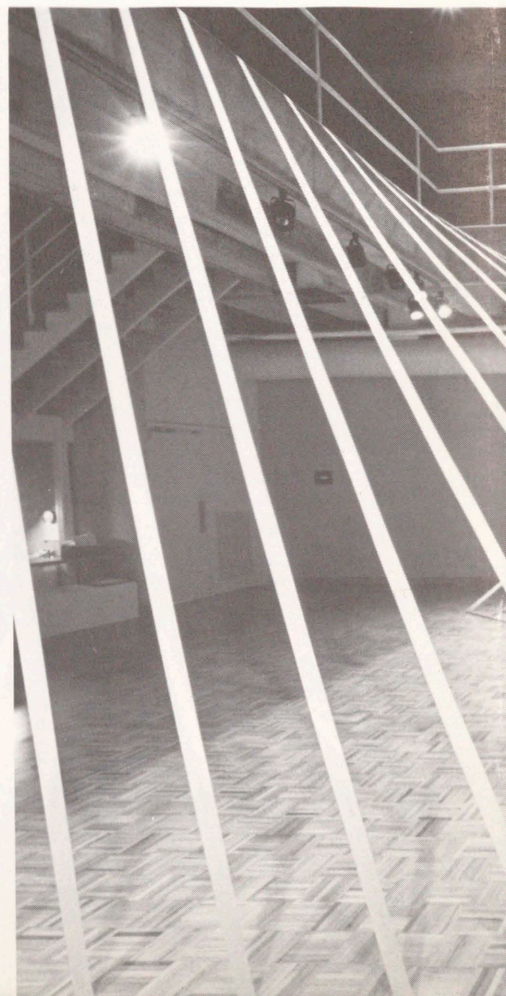
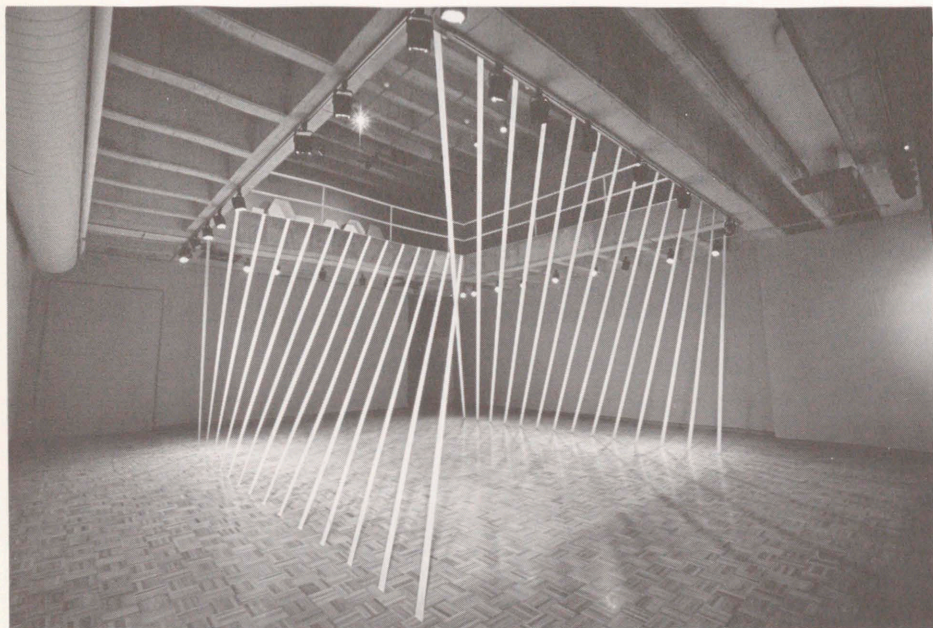




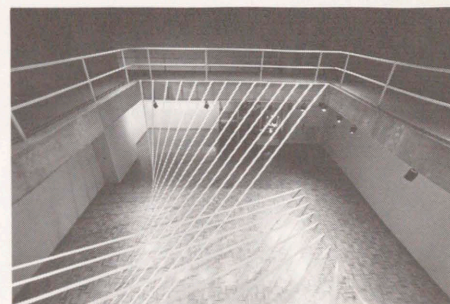
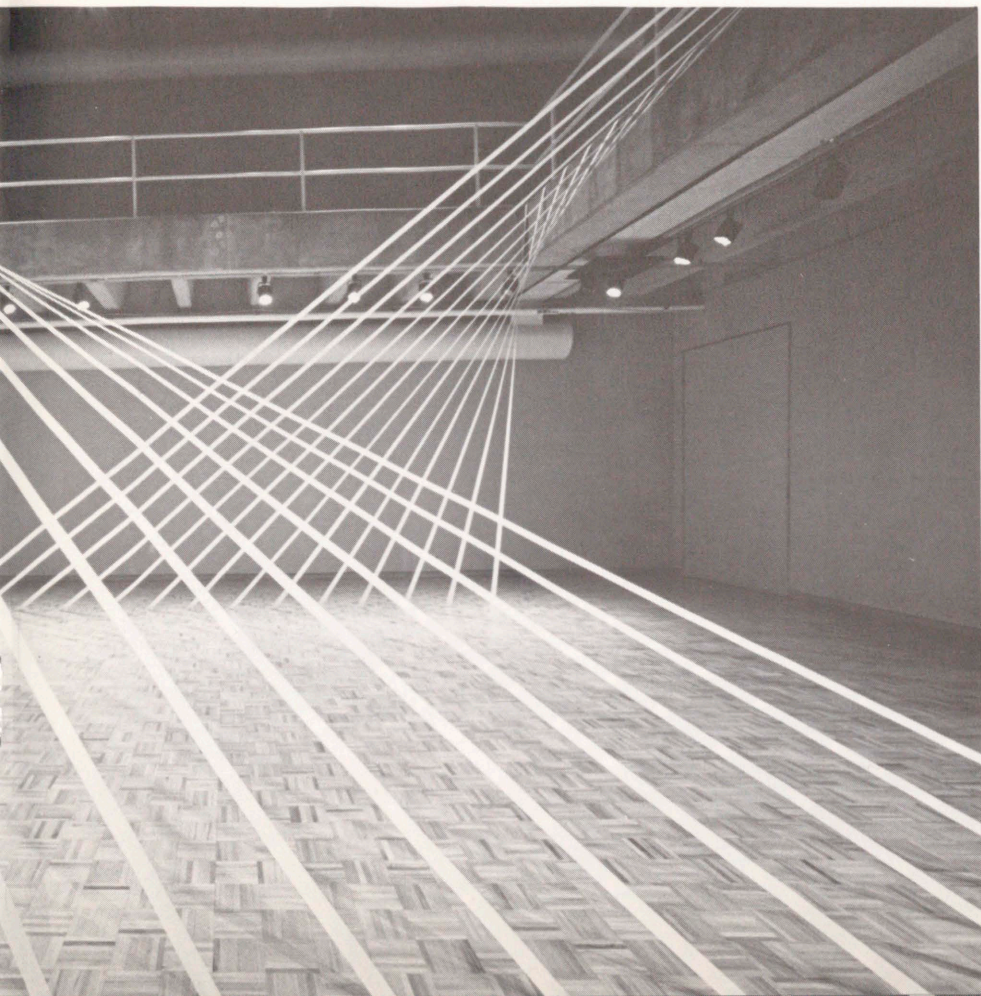
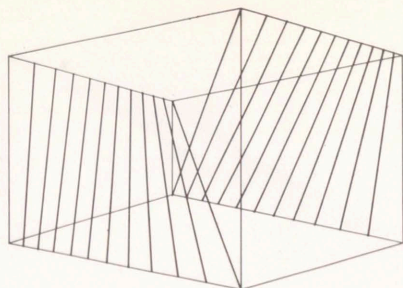
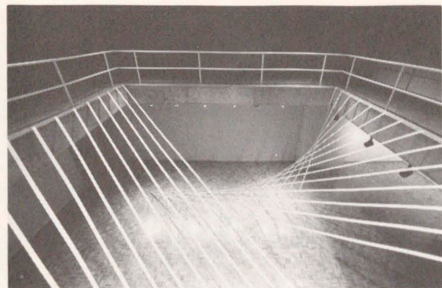




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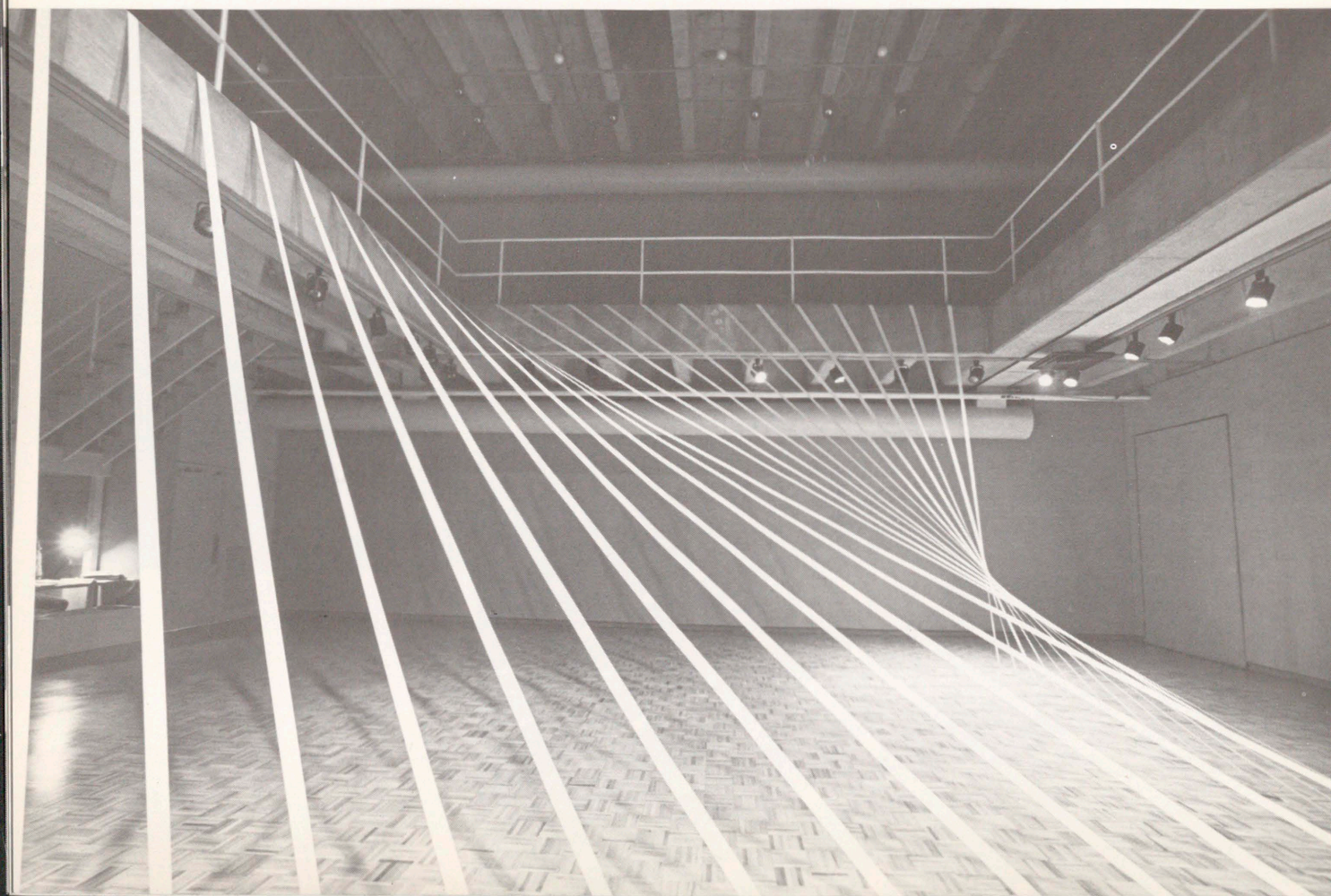




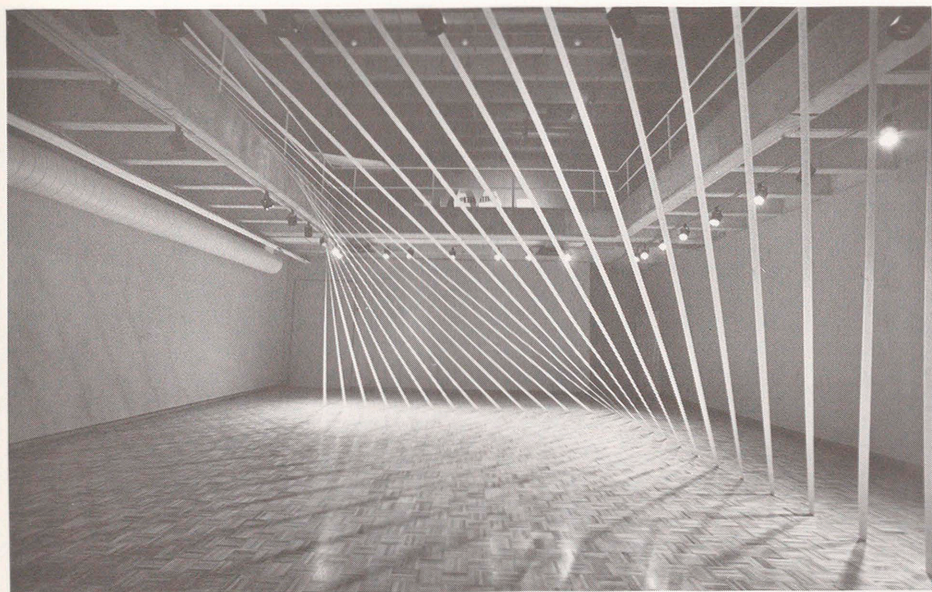
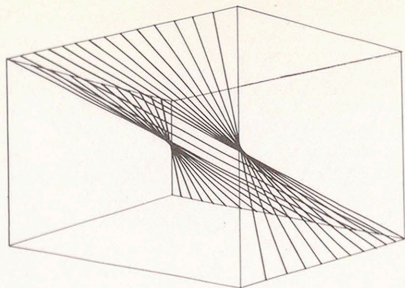
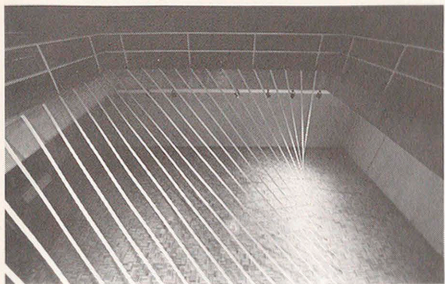




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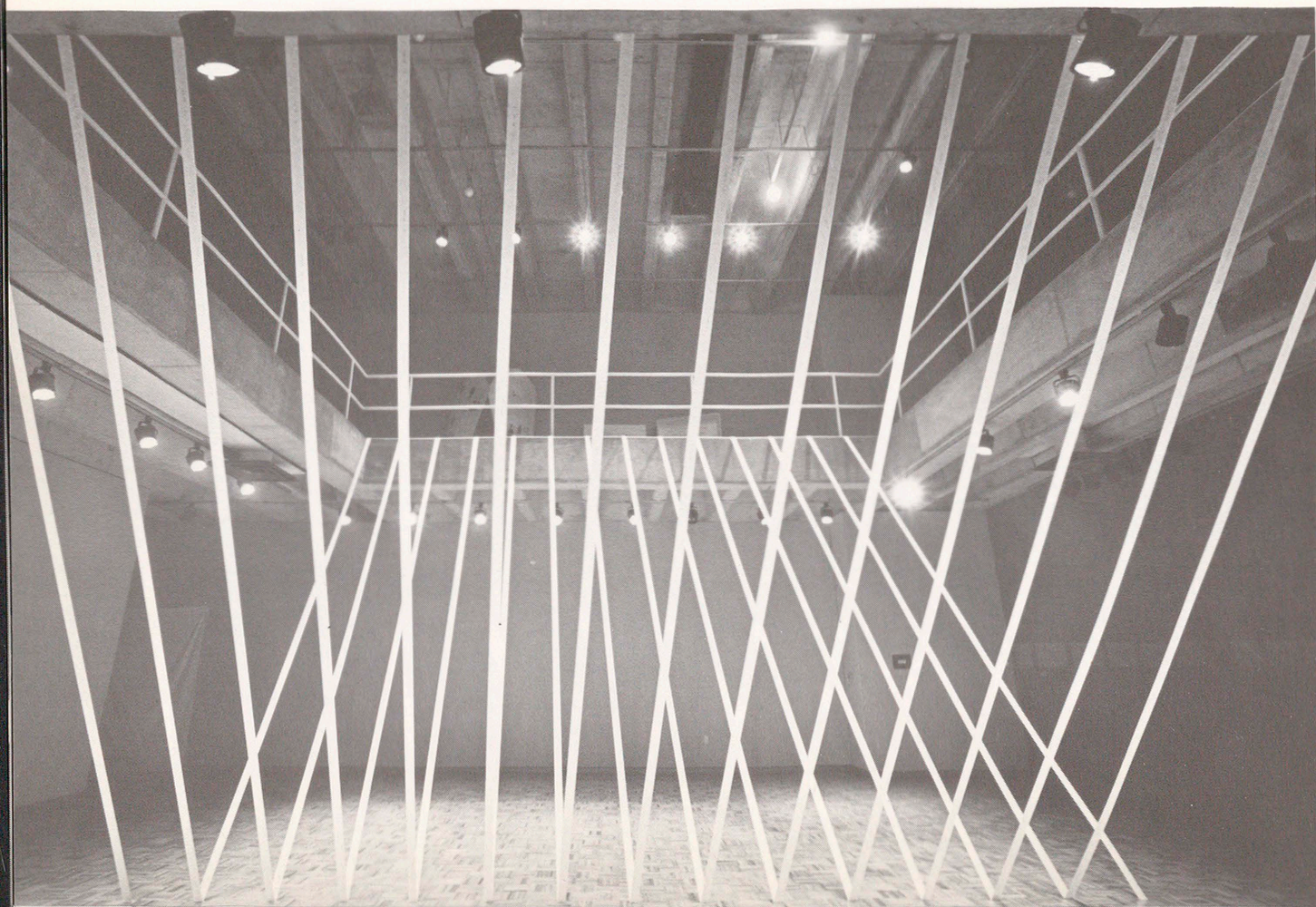




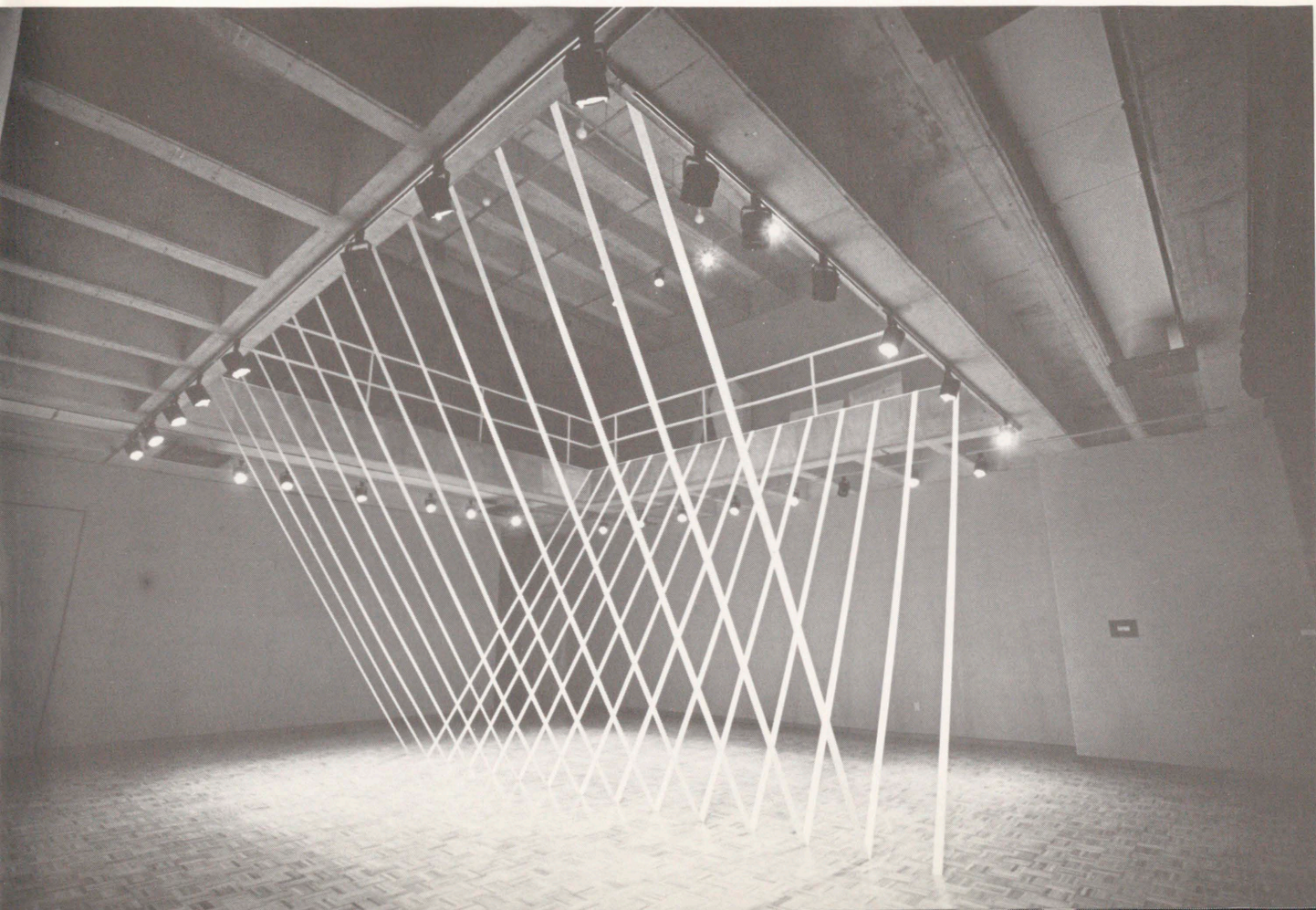
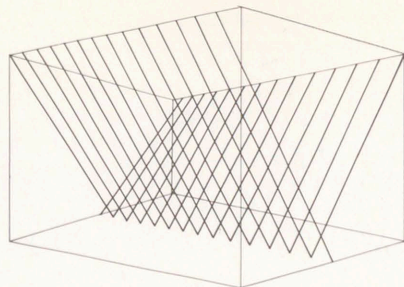
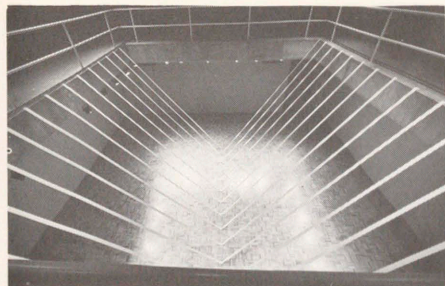




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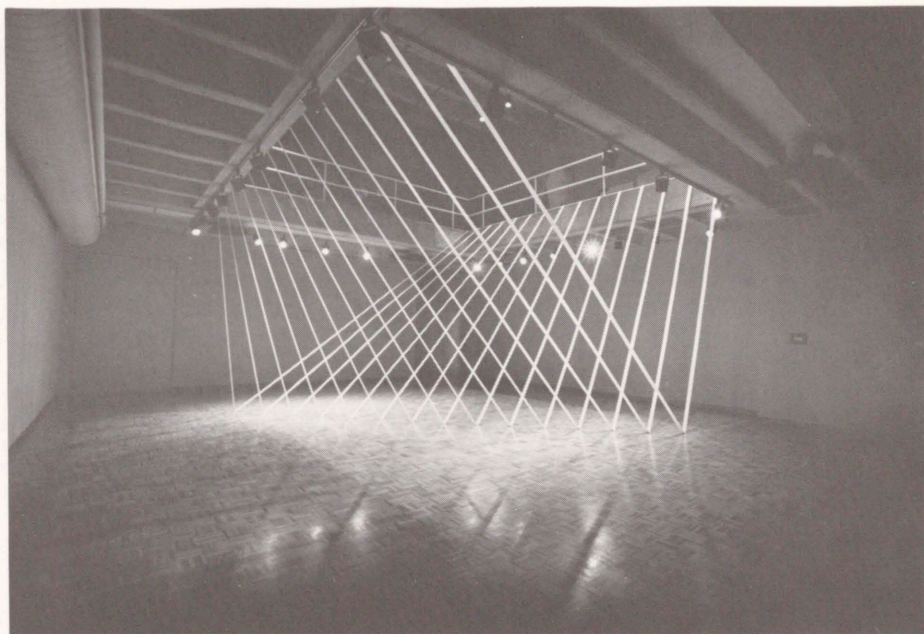
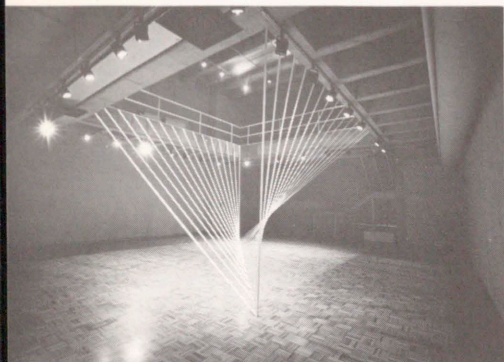




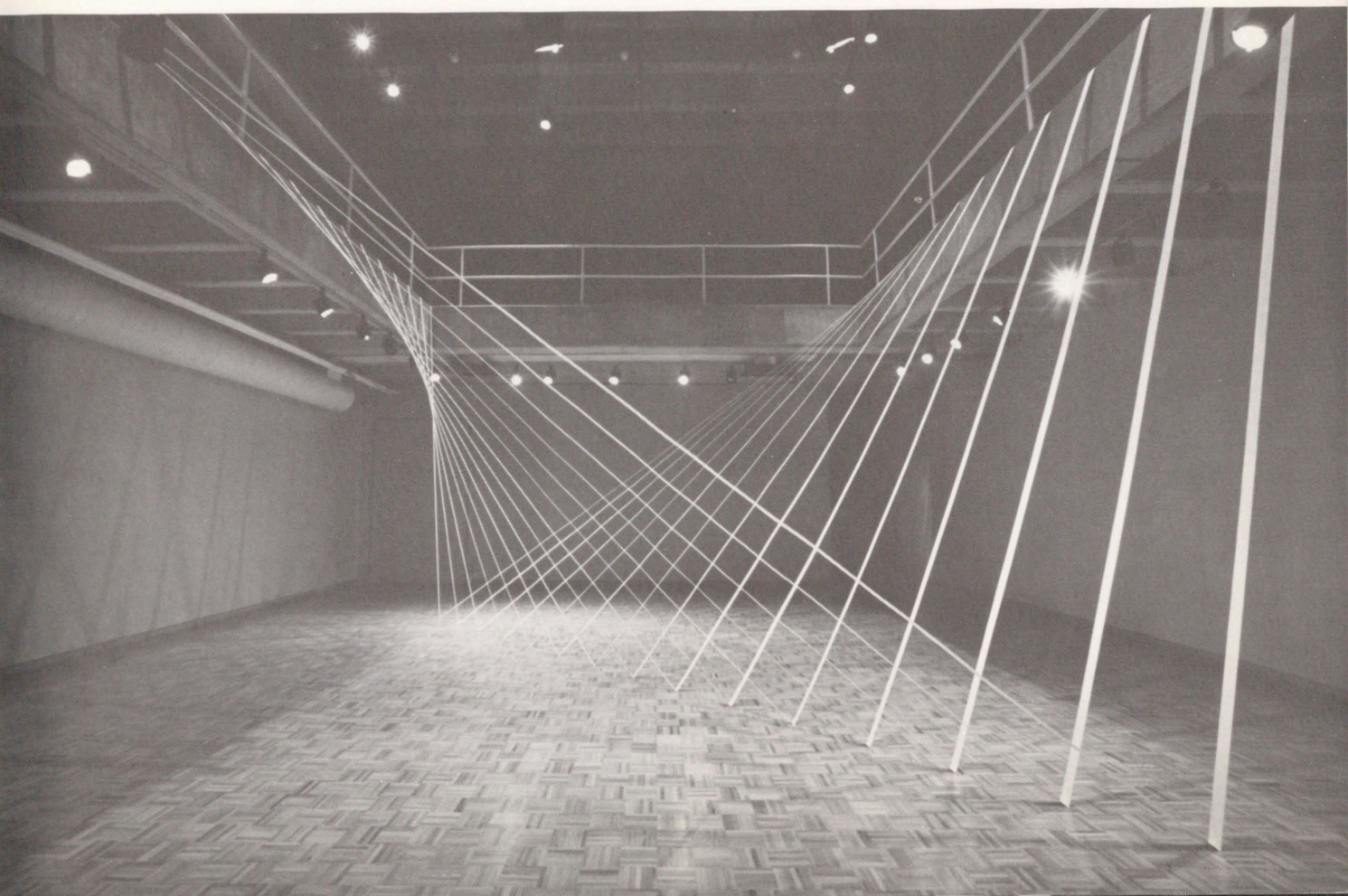
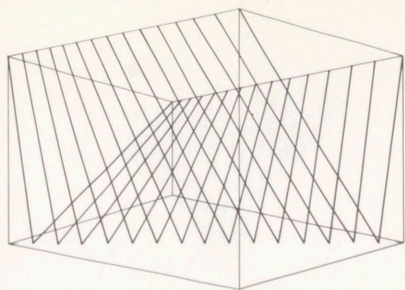
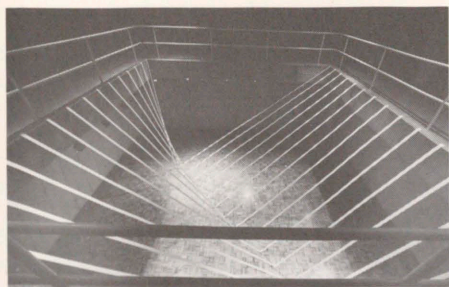




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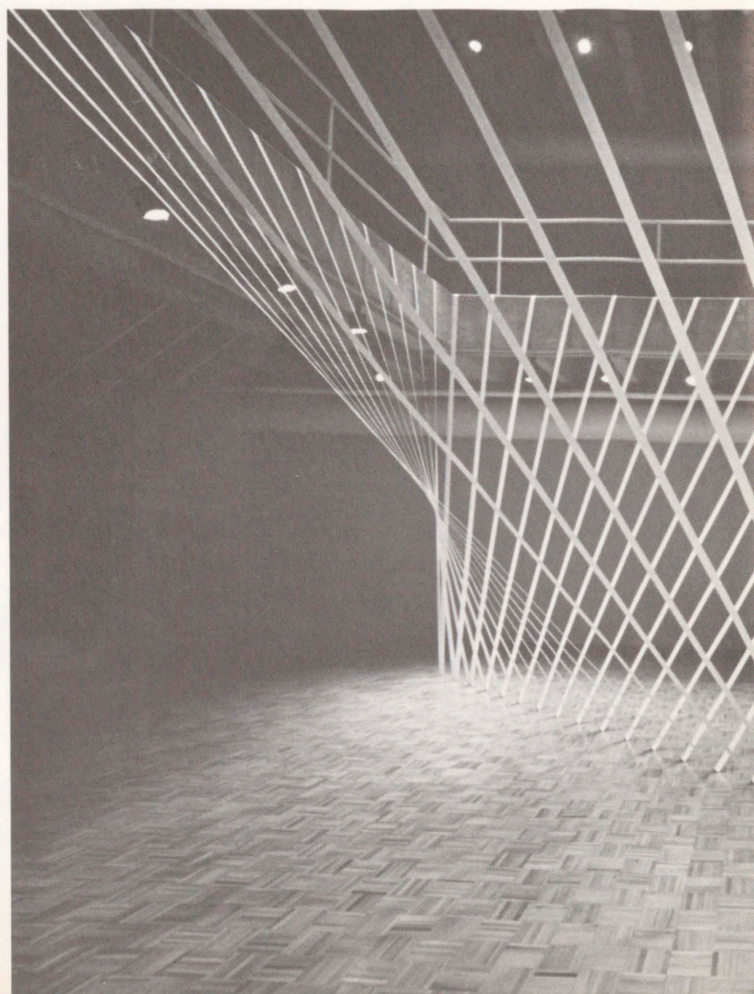
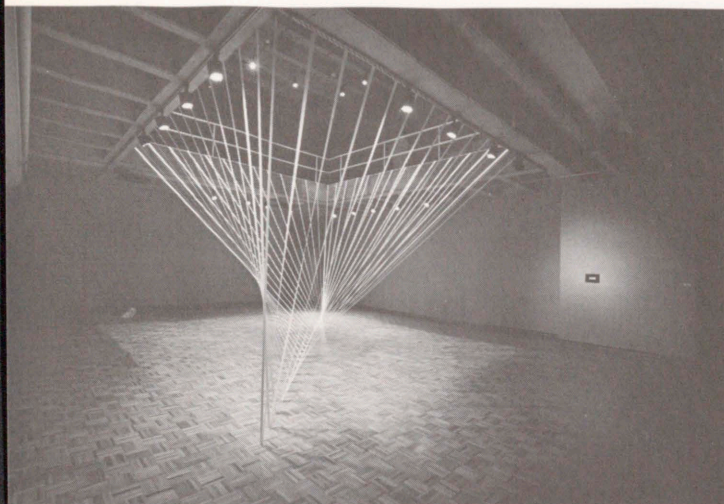




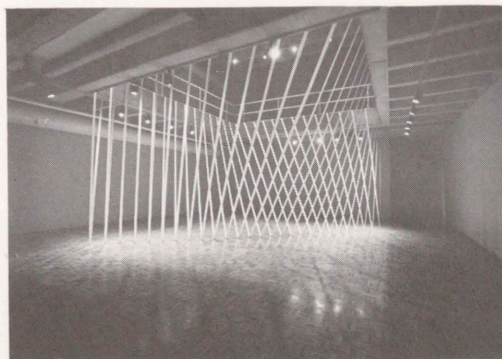
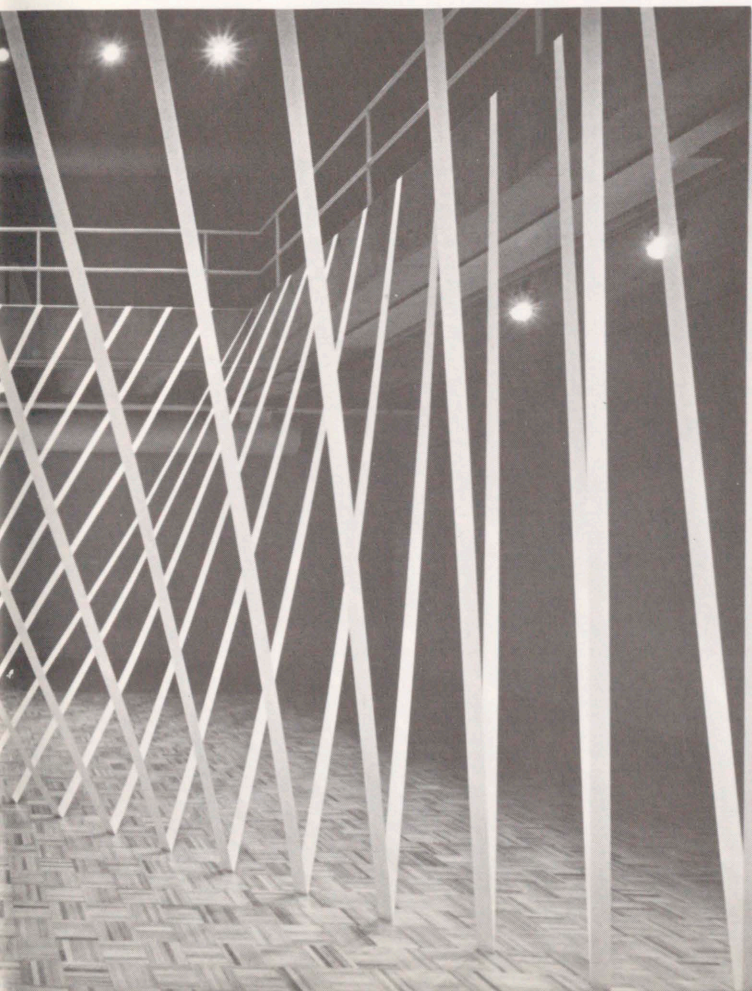
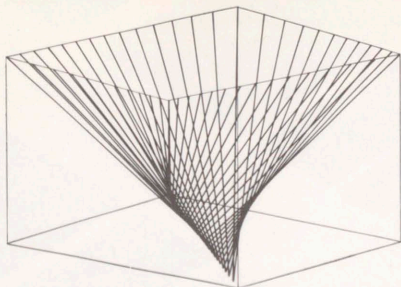




October 28











At its heart, site-specific sculpture is about marking space. At its best it is about marking space in time—a sort of mirror of temporality. Either the sculpture is fixed and around it things change, or the sculpture itself changes to mark time within a given space.

The works documented here seem to be somewhere in between. Though made of simple paper tape, they were visually quite active. Each day when the configuration was changed, the gallery space was actually re-molded.

It is hoped that this book will adequately document the specific sculptures and the impact that each one had on the gallery space.

Michael Jones  
Acting Director



